



CAMBRIDGE
SCHOOL OF
VISUAL &
PERFORMING
ARTS

USE OF REASONABLE FORCE POLICY

Date of Policy	August 2025
Approved by Head Teacher/Rector	
Next Review Date	August 2026
Lead for Review	Head Teacher /Rector

RATIONALE

Staff who are authorised by the Head Teacher/Head of School to have control or charge of students are allowed, under Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DfE Guidance issued in July 2013, to use such force as is reasonable in all the circumstances to prevent a student from doing or continuing to do, any of the following:

- committing any offence,
- causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student himself), or
- prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise, including its use to:
 - remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- prevent a student behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- prevent a student leaving the classroom, where allowing the student to leave would pose a risk to their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- prevent a student from attacking a member of staff or another student, or to stop a fight on campus;
- restrain a student at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

However, the legislation and guidance are clear that ‘force’ must not be used as a ‘punishment’.

GUIDELINES

All staff are advised to avoid physical contact with students. However, it is recognised that there may be circumstances where contact may be necessary. The use of force to control or restrain students should only ever be considered as a last resort. Under no circumstances is physical force to be accepted between students.

Staff are deemed to be authorised if they have been authorised by the Head Teacher / Rector to have control or take charge of students, even if only for a short time, such as during a trip or visit.

Types of Incidents

There are a wide variety of situations in which reasonable force might be appropriate or necessary, to control or restrain a student. These fall into three broad categories:

1. Where action is necessary in self-defence or because there is an imminent risk of injury.
2. Where there is a developing risk of injury, or significant damage to property.
3. When inaction would prejudice the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school

Examples of situations that fall within one of the first two categories are:

- A student attacks another student or a member of staff.
- Students are fighting.
- A student is engaged in, or is on the verge of committing, deliberate damage or vandalism to property.
- A student is causing, or at risk of causing, injury or damage by accident, by rough play, or by misuse of dangerous materials or objects.
- A student is running in a corridor or on a stairway in a manner which might cause an accident likely to injure him or herself or others.
- A student absconds from a class or tries to leave College (**N.B. this will only happen if a student could be at risk if not kept on campus**).

Examples of situations that fall into the third category are:

- A student persistently refuses to obey an order to leave the classroom. A student is behaving in a way that is seriously disrupting a lesson.

REASONABLE FORCE

The term reasonable force covers the broad range of actions that involve a degree of physical contact with a student.

The use of force can be regarded as reasonable only if it is warranted by the circumstances of the particular incident during which it is applied. The use of any degree of physical force is unlawful if the particular circumstances do not warrant the use of physical force. The degree of physical force must be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident and the seriousness of the behaviour or the consequences it is intended to prevent. Any physical force used should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.

Practical Considerations

Before intervening physically, the member of staff should ask the student who is misbehaving to stop. They should specifically ask them, *'Are you refusing to follow my instruction?'*

The member of staff should continue to communicate with the student throughout the incident and make it clear that the restraining will cease as soon as it becomes unnecessary.

In some situations, it is inappropriate for a member of staff to intervene without help, unless in an emergency; for example, with a physically large student or if the member of staff believes he or she may be at risk of injury. In these circumstances the member of staff should remove other students who may be at risk, and summon assistance from a colleague or colleagues, or when necessary, telephone the police. The member of staff should inform the student that he or she has sent for help and continue to try and de-escalate the situation until help arrives.

APPLICATION OF FORCE

Physical force can take several forms. It might involve staff:

- Physically interposing between students
- Blocking a student's path
- Holding
- Pushing
- Pulling
- Leading a student by the hand or arm
- Shepherding a student away by placing a hand in the centre of the back, or, in extreme circumstances, using more restrictive holds

Staff must NOT ACT in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury, for example by:

- Holding a student around the neck, or by the collar, or in any other way that might restrict the student's ability to breathe.
- Slapping, punching, or kicking a student.
- Twisting or forcing limbs against a joint.
- Tripping up a student.
- Holding or pulling a student by the hair or ear.
- Holding a student face down on the ground.

Staff should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent.

All staff must be clear about the techniques that are explicitly classed as inappropriate by the Department for Education. These techniques must NEVER be used regardless of the circumstances:

- the 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- the 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest;
- and the 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The College will ensure reasonable adjustments are made for students with SEN needs or disabled students, who are on the ALS register. These adjustments will be disseminated to the appropriate staff who teach and support these students.

RECORDING INCIDENTS

Incidents requiring the use of force will be fully recorded using the 'Reasonable Force Incident Form, provided as APPENDIX 1.

The College must inform the parents of any such serious incident. Depending on the severity of the incident, the College will decide whether an oral or written report should be given to parents. As with all serious incidents, parents should be given the opportunity to discuss the incident with the Head Teacher or Rector.

COMPLAINTS

If a student complains about the force used, then the matter will be investigated using our complaints process and taking in consideration 'Dealing with allegations of abuse against teachers and non-teaching staff' DfE guidance documents: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/allegations-of-abuse-against-teachers-and-non-teaching-staff> ¹.

APPENDICES:

1. Reasonable Force Incident Report Form
2. Associated Resources

¹ <https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/procedures/managingallegations/>

Appendix 1: Reasonable Force Incident Report Form

Name and address of School/Establishment or Agency (if not CATS or CSVPA)		
Student's full name		
Student's CEG number		
Student's date of birth		
Student's nationality		
Student's gender		
Today's date and time	DATE	TIME
Incident's date and time	DATE	TIME
Your name		
Your role		
Your signature		
Describe the incident as factually as possible. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Events leading up to the incident Where the incident occurred Time and date of the incident Where it happened How the incident began A description of the incident Who was involved Names of anyone else who saw what happened Please use additional paper if necessary.		
What behaviour was the student presenting that warranted restraint?		
Was there damage to property or an assault on a student or staff during the incident?		

What did you do to try to defuse the situation before using restraint?	
How was the student restrained? E.g. two people escort; one person wrap; supine control	
For how long?	
By how many staff members?	
Were they authorised?	
Was anyone injured? If yes, give details.	YES / NO
Was this recorded in the accident book?	YES / NO
Was the student checked for injuries by a member of staff who was not involved in the incident? If yes, by whom?	YES / NO
What do you think caused this behaviour? e.g. attention; emotional release; task escape mechanism; other	
What would you do differently next time to avoid the need for physical restraint?	
Are other staff aware of the need for a planned response to the student?	YES / NO

For the DSL to complete

Incident was reported by	
How was parent/carers informed?	
Date and time	DATE TIME
Incident form completed by Post held	
Date	
Copies to	

APPENDIX 2: ASSOCIATED RESOURCES

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board, Managing Allegations or Serious Concerns in Respect to any adult who works or volunteers with children:

<https://www.safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk/children-board/professionals/procedures/managingallegations/>

Behaviour in Schools DfE Guidance 2024:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ce3721e1bdec001a3221fe/Behaviour in schools - advice for headteachers and school staff Feb 2024.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65ce3721e1bdec001a3221fe/Behaviour_in_schools_-_advice_for_headteachers_and_school_staff_Feb_2024.pdf)

Boarding Schools National Minimum Standards DfE 2022:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1160273/National_Minimum_Standards_for_boarding_schools.pdf Use of Reasonable Force DfE July 2013:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use of reasonable force advice Reviewed July 2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf)

Keeping children safe in education-statutory guidance for schools and colleges September 2024:

[Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1160273/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_-_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges_September_2024.pdf)